## REMARKS

This amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action dated January 5, 2005. For the following reasons, this application should be considered in condition for allowance and the case passed to issue.

Claims 1-4 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being clearly anticipated by the United Kingdom patent '672 (GB 2,345,672, hereafter "GB'672"). This rejection is hereby traversed and reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested. The following is a comparison of the present invention as currently claimed with the GB'672 reference.

The present invention relates to a vehicle air conditioning system comprising an air conditioning unit for generating air-conditioned air. The air conditioning unit is provided with a ventilation opening and a defroster opening. A ventilation duct is connected to the air conditioning unit at the ventilation opening, which conducts the air-conditioned air to a ventilation outlet. The defroster duct is connected to the air conditioning unit at the defroster opening, and conducts the air-conditioned air to a defroster outlet. An additional duct branches off from the defroster duct. This additional duct conducts the air-conditioned air from the defroster duct to an upper ventilation outlet which is provided on an upper surface of an instrument panel to blow the air-conditioned air toward the upper rear of a passenger compartment.

In other aspects of the invention, a vehicle air conditioning system is provided comprising an air conditioning unit for generating air-conditioned air, and first and second ducts connected to the air conditioning unit. The first duct conducts the air-conditioned air to a ventilation outlet, and the second duct conducts the air-conditioned air to a defroster outlet. A third duct branches off from the second duct, and conducts the air-conditioned air to one of an upper ventilation outlet provided thereon on the upper surface of an instrument panel to blow the

air-conditioned air toward the upper rear of a passenger compartment or a rear ventilation outlet provided near a vehicle rear seat.

In still further aspects of the invention, a vehicle air conditioning system is provided comprising an air conditioning unit for generating air-conditioned air. A first path is provided for conducting the air-conditioned air from the air conditioning unit to a ventilation outlet. A second path conducts the air-conditioned air from the air conditioning unit to a defroster outlet. A third path branches off from the second path for conducting the air-conditioned air to an additional outlet other than the ventilation outlet and the defroster outlet.

Among other advantages, the additional duct branching off from the defroster duct makes it feasible to limit a decrease in the rate of air flow at the center ventilation outlets, with the upper ventilation duct provided as an additional branch duct. Also, it is possible to keep the rate of air flow at the center ventilation outlets and that of the side ventilation outlets well balanced, irrespective of whether the air-conditioned air is distributed to the upper ventilation outlet. This is because the upper ventilation duct is not branched off from the ventilation duct. Since air flow resistance is reduced in a bi-level mode, it is possible to limit a decrease in the rate of air flow at the center ventilation outlets. The GB'672 reference does not describe or disclose an additional duct branching off from a defroster duct, this additional duct conducting the air-conditioned air from the defroster duct to an upper ventilation outlet which is provided on an upper surface of an instrument panel to blow the air-conditioned air toward the upper rear of a passenger compartment.

In order to anticipate claims of an invention, a single prior art reference must identically disclose each and every element of the claimed invention. It is apparent that GB'672 fails to

identically disclose each and every element of the claimed invention, and therefore the rejection of anticipation should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

GB'672 describes a ventilation device for vehicles that has an air conditioning box 20 with an air distributor, two air supply ducts 18 and 19 are respectively connected to the air conditioning box 20. The air supply duct 18 is employed to provide strongly heated-up air to flow out of the air exit openings 15 in the front row lying in the vicinity of windscreen 11. This hot-air is said to ensure that even a particularly large wind screen 11 is free from misting. In contrast, the air supply duct 19 is said to be charged with air that is warmed up under conditions of comfort and flows via the air exit openings 15, lying closer to the passengers, in the rear row into the vehicle space above the dashboard 14 where it passes into the region around the passenger's heads. The air supply of the strongly heated air to the windscreen 11 does not need to be separated and so there is only a single air supply duct 18, as noted at page 3 of GB'672. Hence, a total of only two ducts are depicted and described in the GB'672 reference.

In GB'672 it is clear that there is only a single defroster duct 18. GB'672 does not show or suggest an additional duct branching off from the defroster duct, this additional duct conducting air-conditioned air from the defroster duct to an upper ventilation outlet provided on an upper surface of an instrument panel to blow the air-conditioned air toward the upper rear of a passenger compartment. Since GB'672 utterly fails to show such an additional duct that branches off from the defroster duct, GB'672 cannot be said to identically disclose each and every element of the claimed invention. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102 should be reconsidered and withdrawn. For similar reasons, the rejection of claims 7 and 8 should also be reconsidered and withdrawn. Further, Claims 2-3 and 6 further define and limit

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Claim 1 as amended. These claims should be considered allowable since they further define and limit Claim 1 as amended.

In light of the amendments and remarks above, this application should be considered in condition for allowance and the case passed to issue. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated to expedite the prosecution of the application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 502624 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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